

Guyot, a many-sided man, then only a journalist, later a Minister of State, and now eminent as a political economist, who recommended him to study Claude Bernard.¹ On that study Zola based one of the most famous of his essays. Science, which appeals so little to some minds, particularly literary minds of the average calibre, is really the greatest humanitarian agency we possess. The man who experiments, the man who dissects, does not do so for mere pleasure; his aim is the increase and diffusion of knowledge, the benefit of the world, the advantage of his fellowmen. That which is learnt in the laboratory, the workshop, the operating room is put to use in a thousand ways. In physiological and medical science the work may often be very repulsive, yet it reveals the causes of many flaws and ailments, and points to the means of cure. A similar aim became Zola's as he proceeded with his novels. He made it his purpose to inquire into all social sores, all the imperfections and lapses of collective and individual life that seemed to him to require remedying. That everything should be made manifest in order that everything might be healed, such was the motto he adopted.

Yet in the first instance he did not preach, he did not denounce; he contented himself with stating the

facts; lie
confined himself to analysis, dissection, and
demonstration,
and he used the novel as his vehicle, because
the novel
alone appealed to the great majority of people
to whom it
was necessary that the facts should be made
patent if any
remedy were to be applied.

¹ So stated by M. Yves Guyot in conversation with the
writer and others
in the autumn of 1902. It ought to have been mentioned
that it was M.
Guyot who engaged Zola as dramatic critic of "Le Bien
Public." See *ante*
p. 156.